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— Mr. E. W. Nelson has returned from a sojourn of four and a half years in Northern Alaska. Besides his meteorological work, in connection with the U. S. Signal Service, he has brought to Washington an extensive and complete series of specimens, among which are about nine thousand implements and carvings, illustrating the mode of life of the Esquimaux and their handiwork. His notes of their customs, his vocabularies, and his collection of photographs, are very interesting and important. He has also secured a large collection of the birds and fishes of Alaska.

— Among the new fellows elected at the last meeting of the Royal Microscopical Society, says the *English Mechanic*, was Mr. W. A. Thoms, baker of Alyth, who for the past ten years has been engaged in tracing the origin of leaven, which he concludes is identical with the fibrin of gluten and the granular contents of embryo-membranes. Mr. Thoms has also devoted a great deal of time to an investigation of the potato disease, and the salmon fungus.

— Charles M. Wheatley, who was well known for his important discoveries of a Mesozoic Saurian bone-bed near Phoenixville, and of a Quaternary cave in eastern Pennsylvania, containing bones of the *Megalonyx*, tapir, peccary, etc., died May 6th. Mr. William S. Vaux died in Philadelphia May 5th, leaving a bequest of \$10,000 to the Academy of Natural Sciences.

— Among the papers read at the recent meeting of the American Forestry Association, held at Cincinnati, was one paper on forest tree culture in California, and another on the growth of certain California forest trees and the meteorological influences suggested thereby, by R. E. C. Stearns.

— The next meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science will be held at Montreal, beginning Aug. 23, under the presidency of Principal J. W. Dawson. A number of British and other foreign scientists will be present, and the meeting will undoubtedly be one of unusual interest.

— Professor Kowalewsky, of Moscow, has gone to the Caucasus to examine the petroleum deposits of that region.

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## PROCEEDINGS OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES.

AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY. Nov. 4, 1881.—Dr. E. R. Heath described his exploration of the rivers Beni and Mamore in Bolivia, illustrating his remarks with maps of the region explored, and giving many particulars relative to the productions of that part of Bolivia.

Nov. 18.—Dr. Brinton explained the substance of his paper on the names of the gods in the Kiche Myth.

Mr. Lesley read a paper from Dr. Newberry on the origin of the Lake basins, and remarked upon the relations of Dr. Newberry's claims to Professor Spencer's discoveries and views. He then gave a sketch of the progress of the excavations at Assos during the last few months, under the auspices of the Boston Archæological Society.

Dec. 2.—“Notes on the Laramie group, in the vicinity of Raton, New Mexico,” by Professor J. J. Stevenson, was read by title.

Dec. 16.—Mr. Price described the rockery on the grounds of the University of Pennsylvania.

Professor Cope presented two papers of the geological exploration of the Big-Horn region, with special reference to the Eocene period.

PHILADELPHIA ACADEMY NATURAL SCIENCES. Jan. 24.—Mr. Skinner called attention to specimens of *Dryocampa imperialis*, which he exhibited. The insect had reached perfection in the chrysalis stage but had failed to emerge.

Dr. Koenig exhibited a specimen of monosite from the mica mine of Amelia Court House, Va. This monosite contained 25.82 phosphoric acid, 4.22 oxide of thorium, and 69.65 of oxides of cerium, lanthanum, and didymium. The formula derived from this differed from that obtained for North Carolina monosite, and the speaker suggested the possibility of the existence in it of an undetermined metal of the cerium group.

A discussion upon the cause of the timber line on high mountains and of the treeless nature of prairies was carried on, Mr. Meehan stating his belief that water rather than fire was the cause of forest destruction. Messrs. Leidy, Heilprin, Redfield, and Koenig opposed this view.

Dr. Horn spoke upon *Platyssyllus*, a small roach-like beetle parasitic upon *Scalops*, and made by Dr. Le Conte the type of a new family.

Feb. 7.—Professor Heilprin combated the opinion of Professor Sterry Hunt relative to the replacement from the interstellar space of carbonic acid abstracted from the air in the formation of coal of limestone. The speaker held that the limestones of the older geological formations were, like those of our days, formed from those still older, while the amount of carbonic acid stored up in the coal beds of the world would, if again mingled with the atmosphere, only amount to one half of one per cent. of its bulk, or still  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. below the quantity necessary to destroy life.

Mr. Ryder described and illustrated the mesoblastic origin of the ribs from cylindrical vacuolated tracts, and the segmentation of the notochord in *Gambusia patruelis*.

Dr. Leidy exhibited specimens of worms from the black bass. They were bright red, 3 to 6 inches long, and lived coiled up in the muscles and other tissues of the fish. The worm is probably

identical with one of the genus *Agamonema*, found in fresh water turtles.

Mr. Potts exhibited a specimen of the sponge to which the unfitness for use of the Boston drinking water had been attributed. The specimens were composed in part of a *Meyenia* and in part of a *Spongilla*. The *Meyenia* was new, and he proposed for it the name of *M. acuminata*. He believed that a sponge is usually the product of many statospheres, and that hybridism was, from the manner of germination of the statospheres, probably of frequent occurrence. The speaker stated that he had never yet been able to detect the ciliated chambers that have been described in sponges.

Dr. Parker stated that the effect of colloids upon crystalline substances was to retard growth except in the direction of the axes. He believed that the various forms of spicules were caused by this retarding influence of the sarcode, acting with greater or lesser intensity.

Mr. Potts stated that in all spicules of sponges there was an axial space, branching towards the spines; moreover, the larger spicules can be seen to be formed of a series of annular layers.

NEW YORK ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, April 10.—Mr. F. J. G. Wiechmann read a paper on the fusion-structures in meteorites (illustrated with microscopic sections).

April 24.—Professor J. J. Stevenson read a paper on the economic importance of the mineral resources of Southwest Virginia.

May 1.—Dr. B. N. Martin read a memorial notice of the life and works of the late Professor John W. Draper.

May 8th.—Professor H. Le R. Fairchild lectured on the methods of animal locomotion.

May 22.—Dr. A. A. Julien presented notes and observations made during a recent visit to the islands of Curacoa, Buen Ayre and Aruba, W. I. Mr. J. C. Russell read a paper on sulphur deposits in Utah and Nevada.

June 5.—Dr. W. Miller, read a paper on the prevention of tubercular disease in men and animals by Vaccination. Mr. N. L. Britton remarked on a glacial "pot-hole" near Williams Bridge, N. Y.

BOSTON SOCIETY OF NATURAL HISTORY, General Meeting, April 19.—Mr. Frederic Gardiner, Jr., described the methods of propagating salmon, and Dr. W. S. Bigelow spoke on the study of Bacteria and allied forms.

Annual Meeting, May 3.—The curator, secretary and treasurer presented their annual reports on the condition and work of the society during the past year. The officers for 1882-83 were elected, after which the discussion of the general question of glacial erosion suggested by recent communications on the formation of lake basins was opened with a paper by Mr. W. M. Davis.

Mr. S. H. Scudder spoke of an interesting discovery of older fossil insects west of the Mississippi.

GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY OF THE PACIFIC, San Francisco, March 29.—The secretary read a letter from the president of the Board of Trade, requesting the Geographical Society to discuss the merits of the Nicaragua Inter-ocean canal. The following gentlemen were appointed a committee to act thereon: Captain Oliver Eldridge, Andrew McFarlane Davis, William Aldrich, B. B. Redding and Thomas E. Slevin. A paper entitled "Memoir on the River and Harbor of Guayaquil," was then read by Thomas E. Slevin LL.D. The president gave notice that a paper would be read at the next meeting by B. B. Redding on the Gallapagos islands.

AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY, April 13.—The president, Chief Justice C. P. Daly, delivered an address upon Spain, Straits of Gibraltar and Tangiers in 1881.

MIDDLESEX INSTITUTE, March 14 and 21.—Mr. R. Frohock delivered the third and fourth lectures of the course on the "Morphology of Leaves," and the "Arrangement of leaves on the stem."

March 28 and April 4.—Mr. F. S. Collins lectured on the "Arrangement of flowers," and the "Morphology of the flower; calyx and corolla."

April 11.—Mrs. A. J. Dolbear explained the "Morphology of stamens and pistils" and "Æstivation."

April 12, Regular Monthly Meeting.—Informal remarks were made by President Dame and others. Resolutions of respect to the memory of Professor Thomas P. James were read, ordered to be placed on record, and a copy to be sent to the family of the honored deceased. A committee on floral exhibitions for the current year was appointed, and the executive committee instructed to arrange with the Essex Institute for a joint field excursion in the Middlesex fells in June.

BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON, May 26th.—The following communications were made:—Exhibition of Eskimo carvings of animals by E. W. Nelson. Appeal for an exploration of the molluscan Fauna of the District of Columbia by Wm. H. Dall. Exhibition of a rare Arctic bird, the Spoonbilled Sandpiper (*Euryrhorhynchus pygmaeus*), by T. H. Bean, M. D. Air sacks of vertebrates, by R. M. Shufeldt, M. D. About mules, by Professor M. G. Ellzey.

APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN CLUB, May 12.—The report of Mr. J. B. Henck, Jr., the delegate of the Club to the Alpine Congress, held at Milan last summer, was read.

Mr. W. M. Davis read a paper on the little mountains east of the Catskills.

A paper by Henry L. Stearns, entitled "An Ascent of Pike's Peak," was read.